

AUTHORIZING REPRESENTATION BY THE SENATE LEGAL COUNSEL IN THE CASE OF JENNIFER GRAPPELL V. ALBERTO M. CARVALHO, ET AL.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 306, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 306) to authorize representation by the Senate Legal Counsel in the case of Jennifer Grappell v. Alberto M. Carvalho, et al.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 306) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, JULY 19, 2021

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 3 p.m., Monday, July 19; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order following the remarks of Senators CRUZ and LEE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). The Senator from Texas.

CUBA

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I rise today to discuss the protests we have seen erupt in Cuba over the past several days.

On Sunday, shouts of "libertad!"—freedom!—were heard in dozens of cities and towns all over Cuba as people took to the streets to protest the com-

munist government that has had a stranglehold on that nation for 62 years.

This socialist regime has tortured, killed, silenced, denied freedom, and driven into exile generations of Cubans, forcing many, including my family, to flee or to be murdered. It has cut off Cuba from the rest of the world. It has destroyed its economy so that, today, Cubans stand in long lines for food, for medicine, for basic supplies. They endure energy blackouts, and government officials can shut off their censored internet service on a whim—as they did on Sunday when the regime panicked about the protests.

This battle for freedom is personal to me. When Fulgencio Batista staged a coup in Cuba and became a brutal dictator in the 1950s, my father fought against his regime. My dad was imprisoned and tortured. His captors broke his nose and bashed in his front teeth so they were dangling from his mouth. My father fled Cuba—the country he had fought for and had been brutalized for trying to save—and in 1957, my father came to the United States. He went to Texas with \$100 sewn into his underwear. He had nothing. He attended the University of Texas on a student visa and got a job washing dishes, making 50 cents an hour.

In the summer of 1959, soon after Castro had taken over Cuba, my father returned to visit his family, and he was horrified by what he saw. It quickly became evident that Castro was even worse than Batista had been. My father's sister, my tia Sonia, was still there, and she became part of the counterrevolution against Castro. Like her brother, my tia Sonia was thrown in prison, and she was tortured by Castro's goons.

In growing up, my cousin Bibi and I used to sit at the feet of my dad and my tia Sonia and hear stories about their fight for freedom, hear their stories about the battling in Cuba just like the heroic protesters on the streets are doing today. The freedom of America was the dream that allowed them to endure the brutality of Cuba. America was and is a beacon of hope for all of those who, like them, have endured oppression, and that is why we saw so many protesters in Cuba who were flying American flags on Sunday—because the American flag is a symbol of hope in Havana, in Hong Kong, and all across the globe.

America must respond. Over the past few days, the world has seen that the American people stand squarely with the men and women of Cuba in their noble fight for liberty.

Worryingly, however, the Biden administration has stopped short of strong, clear support for the brave protesters who are marching in the street, and it has been reluctant to issue clear and unequivocal condemnation for the communist dictatorship that oppresses those people. In statement after statement, as protesters have swept into the streets—literally risking their lives to

stand for freedom—administration officials have issued lukewarm and guarded statements.

After being shamed into finally taking stronger positions, President Biden finally put out a statement, saying that the protesters were exercising their right to peaceful assembly, but even that is wrong. In Cuba, they have no right to peaceful assembly because the Cuban dictatorship is out there arresting the protesters right now. It is out there beating the protesters right now. It is out there imprisoning the protesters right now. They are speaking with great courage, and the communist dictatorship is doing everything it can to silence what they are saying.

The Biden administration has also said the protests are about COVID-19 vaccines. That, unfortunately, doesn't even pass the laugh test. Just this week, the White House Press Secretary said the protests were about misadministration in Cuba, mismanagement. Well, the last I checked, the protesters in the streets weren't chanting: "Manage better!" They were chanting: "Libertad!"—freedom! They were chanting: "Down with the dictatorship!"

America has a unique role in the world—a role to provide leadership, a role to speak the truth—and at times of inflection, at times when people are risking their lives for freedom, the leadership of America matters.

Here is what President Biden needs to say to the Cuban people: To the Cuban people, we stand with you. To the Cuban people, you are right that you have a right to liberty; you have a right to speech; you have a right to worship; you have a right to live your lives and raise your children and be free of oppression and torture and murder.

President Biden needs to go on to say: The communist dictatorship that oppresses you is evil—period, full stop.

In my Senate office, I have a large painting of President Ronald Reagan when he was standing in front of the Brandenburg Gate. Above the gate, in the style of the graffiti that was on the Berlin Wall, are the words: "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." American leadership matters, and it is heard in the darkest recesses.

Some years ago, I sat down with Natan Sharansky, the famed Soviet dissident. He and I sat down together in Jerusalem, and he told me, when he was in a gulag in the Soviet Union, that prisoners would pass notes from cell to cell: Did you hear what Reagan said? "Evil empire," "ash heap of history," "tear down this wall."

Presidential silence is heard in Cuba, and Presidential clarity is heard in Cuba.

I want to close by reading a text that I got this week from my mom. My mom and our family are in communication with family friends still in Cuba.